

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 L-03 EB-08 SCA-01 H-01 INR-07
DLOS-06 PRS-01 CG-00 DOTE-00 SS-15 TRSE-00 COME-00
SAL-01 OES-06 NSC-05 JUSE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 /072 W

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P R 212332Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2972
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0508

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EFIS, PLOS, MILI
SUBJECT: GOE CONTINUES TO DENY POSSIBILITY THAT ECUADOREAN
NAVAL VESSEL CHASED US TUNA BOAT

REF: QUITO 0426

1. SUMMARY: THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS DENIED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT ECUADOREAN NAVY HAD CHASED ANY US TUNA BOAT THIS SEASON, EXPRESSED GOE'S TRONG DESIRE TO AVOID SEIZURES OF US TUNA BOATS AND AFFIRMED GOE'S INTENT TO MAINTAIN CLOSE AND CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH USG, (ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF CURRENT TENSIONS WITH PERU). ECUADOREAN NAVY FEARS STORIES ABOUT CINDY ANN INCIDENT MAY PROVOKE DEMANDS FOR MORE VIGOROUS ENFORCEMENT OF ECUADOREAN FISHING LAWS AGAINST AMERICAN TUNA BOATS. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM, ON JAN 21, ACCOMPANIED BY CDR STEVENS, USN, OF THE MILITARY LIAISON OFFICE, CALLED ON VICE ADMIRAL RENAN OLMEDO, DELEGATED CHIEF OF THE JOINT COMMAND OF ECUADOREAN ARMED FORCES, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS AND NO. 2 MAN IN
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ECUADOREAN NAVY, TO DISCUSS REPORTED INCIDENT IN WHICH SKIPPER OF TUNA-BOAT CINDY ANN CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN CHASED BY ECUADOREAN PATROL BOAT. PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO REVIEW INCIDENT, EXPLAIN WHY USG COULD NOT DENY STORY OF TUNA BOAT SKIPPER (AS REQUESTED EARLIER BY ECUADOREAN NAVY), AND TO ASSURE ADMIRAL OLMEDO OF USG'S CONTINUED INTEREST AND CONCERN THAT SEIZURES OF US TUNA

BOATS BE AVOIDED.

3. ADMIRAL OLMEDO EXPRESSED GOE'S INTENSE PREOCCUPATION ABOUT REPORTED INCIDENT AND REITERATED GOE DENIAL THAT ANY ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSEL HAD BEEN CHASING ANY US TUNA BOAT. THE ADMIRAL REVIEWED THE DAILY REPORTS OF THE LOCATIONS OF ALL ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSELS FROM JAN 10 TO JAN 18 WITH THE DCM, AND ACCORDING TO THESE REPORTS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSEL TO HAVE BEEN IN THE VICINITY OF THE CHASE AS REPORTED BY SKIPPER OF CINDY ANN. (THESE DOCUMENTS OF COURSE COULD HAVE BEEN DOCTORED, BUT EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY.) CDR STEVENS, HIMSELF, WAS IN GUAYAQUIL ON JAN 10 AND SAW IN THE PORT ALL 3 ECUADOREAN PATROL BOATS BELONGING TO ECUADOR THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE THE APPEARANCE OF A PURSUING COAST GUARD TYPE VESSEL, AS REPORTED BY SKIPPER OF CINDY ANN.

4. ADMIRAL OLMEDO EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE DCM'S ASSURANCES THAT THE USG WAS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WITHIN ITS JURIDICAL POSITION TO AVOID FISHING SEIZURES THIS YEAR, AND HE ASSURED THE DCM THAT THE ECUADOREAN NAVY WAS DOING LIKEWISE. OLMEDO REPEATED GOE OFFICIALS OFTSTATED AFFIRMATION OF THE GOE'S DESIRE FOR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE USG AND STATED THIS WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AT A TIME WHEN TENSIONS WERE HIGH WITH PERU.

5. ADMIRAL OLMEDO SAID THAT ECUADOR HAD VERY EXPLICIT
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LAWS CONCERNING THE CAPTURE OF BOATS FISHING IN ECUADOREAN-CLAIMED WATERS WITHOUT AN ECUADOREAN FISHING LICENSE, AND SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE GOVT OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT ORDER ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSELS TO IGNORE THESE LAWS THAT THE ECUADOREAN NAVY WAS TAKING EVERY MEASURE POSSIBLE TO AVOID CONFRONTATIONS AND PROBLEMS. THE DCM AND OLMEDO AGREED THAT BOTH COUNTRIES SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT TO AVOID PROBLEMS THIS TUNA SEASON THAT MIGHT COMPLICATE OR DAMAGE THE CLOSE RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

6. COMMENT: ECUADOREAN NAVY HAS BEEN MADE VERY UNCOMFORTABLE BY REPORT OF CINDY ANN SKIPPER. GOE LEADERS FEAR REPORT WILL PROVOKE DEMANDS FOR MORE VIGOROUS ENFORCEMENT OF ECUADOREAN LAW REGARDING FISHING IN ECUADOREAN CLAIMED WATERS. BASED ON EMBASSY'S KNOWLEDGE OF DISPOSITION OF ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSELS, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE ECUADOREAN NAVY BOAT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE OTHER SHIP INVOLVED IN THE CINDY ANN INCIDENT.

7. RECOMMENDATION: RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT PASS ON TO TUNA BOAT ASSOCIATION THAT PART OF CONVERSATION WHICH DEALS WITH UNLIKELIHOOD ECUADOREAN NAVAL VESSEL CHASED CINDY ANN AND EMPHASIZE THAT STORIES OF THIS KIND IN THE PRESS INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF SEIZURES. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WHEN FUTURE AMBIGUOUS REPORTS OF THIS KIND ARE RECEIVED IN SAN DIEGO THEY BE KEPT OFF THE PRESS WIRES UNTIL ALL THE FACTS ARE IN. IN THIS CASE, FOR EXAMPLE, IT HAS TURNED OUT THAT CINDY ANN WAS NEVER ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE VESSEL WHICH ALLEGEDLY CHASED IT FOR TWO HOURS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
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